

PEDAGOGICAL CONDITIONS OF PREPARING STUDENTS FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

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Annotation: This article analyzes the pedagogical conditions for preparing students for inclusive education in the higher education system. It covers the concept of inclusive education, its theoretical and methodological foundations, and the reforms being implemented in Uzbekistan. The formation of an inclusive culture, the development of theoretical knowledge and practical skills, the creation of flexible curricula, and the improvement of teachers' qualifications are indicated as important conditions. The issues of creating an inclusive environment in higher education institutions, eliminating barriers, adapting educational materials, and introducing support systems are also discussed. The study serves to strengthen the role of higher education in forming an inclusive society.

Keywords: Inclusive education, Pedagogical conditions, Higher education, Disability, Inclusive environment, Special needs, Student preparation, Uzbekistan

Introduction

The need and demand for inclusive education is growing globally, as an estimated 1 billion people worldwide live with disabilities. A true guarantee of human rights requires that societies ensure the full integration of persons with disabilities and their equal access to all opportunities. In Uzbekistan, supporting persons with disabilities, protecting their rights, and creating a barrier-free environment have risen to the level of state policy, supported by a solid legal framework and numerous decrees. Inclusive education is one of the key principles of this initiative, which aims to integrate children with disabilities into mainstream schools. These efforts also need to be extended to the higher education system and prepare students for an inclusive society.

The Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PF-6065 dated September 29, 2020 "On measures to further improve the system of comprehensive support for persons with disabilities and protection of their rights and freedoms" and the new edition of the Law "On Education" in 2020 clearly define the concept of inclusive education, which indicates the priority of state policy in this area. Currently, the number of students involved in inclusive programs in general secondary schools is increasing, for example, by 2020, about 13,000 students in more than 3,200 general secondary schools studied in inclusive education. Uzbekistan aims to attract 40 percent of children with special educational needs to regular schools by 2025. The role of higher education in achieving these goals is invaluable, since the creation of inclusive pedagogical conditions and the formation of students' awareness of this issue are of great importance in training the leading personnel of the future society.

Analysis of relevant literature

The concept of inclusive education and its theoretical and methodological foundations have undergone significant development in recent decades. Initially, within the framework of the integration model, there were attempts to adapt persons with disabilities to the existing system, but later the idea of inclusion put forward the need for the system to adapt itself, recognizing the specific needs and abilities of each individual. Inclusive education is based on the principles of human rights, which recognize the right of each individual to education and ensure that no one is discriminated against. This approach supports the social model of disability, that is, it sees disability not as an individual defect, but as a result of obstacles created by society. Therefore, inclusive education is a global movement aimed at creating an environment that is



beneficial not only for people with disabilities, but also for society as a whole, values diversity and creates equal opportunities for all.

Considerable work is being done in Uzbekistan to develop inclusive education. Although integration efforts were limited in the past, the clear introduction of the concept of inclusive education in the new edition of the Law “On Education” in 2020 was an important milestone. Currently, measures are being taken to involve children with disabilities in general secondary education in educational institutions. However, legal foundations alone are not enough for the successful implementation of inclusive education. It is necessary to create a favorable environment, build new schools with appropriate equipment, conduct special training of teachers, and develop strong cooperation between educators. These requirements are also relevant in the higher education system, requiring the training of future educators and other professionals in inclusive practices.

The experience of the National University of Uzbekistan (NUU) in terms of practical aspects of creating an inclusive pedagogical environment in higher education is noteworthy. The university has made supporting its approximately 400 students with disabilities a strategic priority and aims to create equal educational opportunities. NUU strives to create a barrier-free environment and fully implement the principles of global inclusive education in accordance with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Sustainable Development Goals, and national legislation. The university’s comprehensive action plan for 2022-2030 includes the establishment of a Center for Inclusive Education, the development of special educational materials in all disciplines, and the introduction of inclusive approaches into faculty professional development modules. The plan also provides for equipping information resources with special programs, Braille and audiobooks, and the organization of sign language courses. In addition to academic support, Uzbek National University of Science and Technology provides accessible infrastructure, such as ramps and elevators equipped with Braille, accessible toilets, as well as financial assistance through a partial rent reimbursement program. Innovations such as the Braille electronic chess project implemented by students complement these initiatives, helping to achieve high standards in inclusive education and create a supportive learning environment. This experience can serve as a model for the widespread introduction of inclusion in higher education.

The main pedagogical conditions and content of preparing students for inclusive education include the formation of an inclusive culture, the development of theoretical knowledge and practical skills, the adaptation of curricula, and the improvement of the qualifications of teaching staff. An inclusive culture involves the development of openness, empathy, tolerance, and respect for diversity in students. This can be achieved through the organization of various cultural events, discussions, and projects during the educational process. In terms of theoretical knowledge, students should have information about various forms of disability, their causes, special educational needs and relevant legislation. Practical skills include effective communication with persons with disabilities, providing them with appropriate assistance, using additional technologies and applying adaptive learning strategies. These conditions should be constantly and systematically provided in higher education institutions.

Research methodology

This study is based on a theoretical-analytical approach and is based on an analysis of existing literature, international documents and the legislation of the Republic of Uzbekistan. The main purpose of the article is to identify the pedagogical conditions for preparing for inclusive education, systematize them and develop recommendations for their implementation in higher education practice. The study uses descriptive and comparative analysis methods and summarizes various approaches and practical experiences. Also, using a systematic analysis, the



main components of preparation for inclusive education and their interrelationships were studied. The practical examples presented in the article (including the experience of the National University of Uzbekistan) demonstrate the relevance of the topic and the practical significance of the ideas put forward. The study is aimed at providing a deep understanding and practical solutions in the field of inclusive education, based on a qualitative approach.

A deep analysis of the main pedagogical conditions and content of preparing students for inclusive education requires their systematic inclusion in the higher education process. First of all, this is associated with the formation of an inclusive culture in students, which includes appreciating the diversity of others, developing a positive attitude towards people with disabilities, and cultivating empathy and tolerance. The content of this condition can be implemented through psychological and pedagogical exercises, educational projects, seminars and trainings. Secondly, students must have sufficient knowledge of the theory and practice of inclusive education. This includes educating them about types of disabilities, special educational needs, and methodologies for developing and implementing individual education plans. This knowledge should be incorporated into relevant training courses, modules, and specialized subjects. Third, it is important to develop practical skills. This includes skills such as communicating effectively with people with disabilities, using assistive technologies, creating a supportive environment, and applying adaptive pedagogical strategies. These skills can be strengthened through internships, internships, volunteering, and simulation exercises.

The practical aspects of creating an inclusive educational environment in higher education cover several areas. It is necessary to adapt the physical environment, that is, equip buildings with ramps, elevators, special toilets. It is also important to eliminate information barriers, which means using educational materials in Braille, audio-video resources, special programs and sign language interpreters. The professional development of teaching and professorial staff should be carried out systematically, they should be trained in inclusive pedagogy, differentiated teaching methods and individual approaches. In addition, student support centers, psychological and pedagogical services should be established. It is also of practical importance to appoint persons responsible for managing inclusive education in higher education institutions and provide them with the necessary powers.

Ways to assess and improve the effectiveness of training for inclusive education require constant monitoring and feedback mechanisms. Assessment can be done using a variety of methods, such as assessing students' inclusive knowledge and skills through tests, practical assignments, case studies, and through questionnaires and interviews. Lesson observations and self-assessment questionnaires can be used to assess the level of teachers' implementation of inclusive practices. Improvement strategies are based on the assessment results. This includes making changes to curricula, updating teacher training programs, further improving infrastructure, and studying and implementing international experiences. Involving students in inclusive initiatives and taking their feedback into account also helps to improve the effectiveness of the educational process. Higher education institutions should constantly strengthen ties with international organizations and local partners, conduct scientific research, and exchange best practices in the field of inclusive education.

Conclusion

As inclusive education becomes an integral part of modern society, the higher education system must play a leading role in this area. Preparing students for active participation in an inclusive society requires not only providing theoretical knowledge, but also developing deep empathy, tolerance, and practical skills. The pedagogical conditions identified in this study, including the formation of an inclusive culture, the development of theoretical and practical skills, the adaptation of curricula, and the improvement of the qualifications of teaching staff,



serve as the basis for creating an inclusive environment in higher education institutions and fully preparing students.

The practical aspects of creating an inclusive pedagogical environment in higher education, including the elimination of physical and informational barriers, the adaptation of educational materials, and the establishment of support systems, are very important. The experience of the National University of Uzbekistan is a vivid example of successful steps in this direction. The continuous implementation of performance assessment and improvement mechanisms will serve to improve the quality of education and deepen inclusive practices.

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